

SENATOR HOAGLAND: Mr. Speaker and colleagues, we have distributed to each of your desks this amendment that Senator Cullan and I are co-sponsoring to this particular bill. Now let me just explain briefly what the amendment does. I have received calls and had complaints from people in Omaha, from businessmen in Omaha, particularly small businessmen, who were required to pay a tax under the litter bill, who were required to pay a tax under this particular litter bill, but these businesses do not manufacture products which contribute to litter, yet they are taxed for it. Now the principal thing that this particular amendment does is that it exempts from paying a litter tax companies, small businesses and large businesses, which manufacture products that do not directly contribute to litter, and you all can see that outlined in 16 and 17 of the amendment that we have distributed. Now it seems to me to be basically fair to do that and it seems to me to be basically unfair to tax businesses across the board in Omaha or in Lincoln or anywhere else in the state that don't directly contribute to the litter problem. Now, the litter problem is peculiarly the problem of the can manufacturers and the bottle manufacturers and the paper manufacturers who profit from products that become litter. Now if those companies profit from products that become litter, they are the ones that should pay the taxes that are designed to clean up the litter, not businesses that manufacture products that have nothing to do with litter or do not directly contribute to the litter problem. So I think this amendment is sensible. I think it is fair to businessmen throughout the state who run businesses that don't contribute to litter. Now, these amendments have been published for quite awhile and I think you know there are several lobbyists who have been working this bill over the last couple of days, and those lobbyists came to me a couple of days ago and they said, Hoagland, if your amendment attaches it is going to cut the revenues by one-half. We have put pencil to paper on this thing and if we exempt from taxation companies that don't litter, it is going to cut the revenues in half and we need those revenues to operate the litter control problem. So, what I have done is I have added a new section to these amendments which is Section 1 in the amendments that have been passed out now to double the tax. So the revenues will stay the same but the tax will be paid by the companies that profit from the products that become litter, and the tax won't be paid by companies that manufacture products that have little or nothing to do with litter. Now, I think it is a fair amendment. It speaks for itself. The amendment does one other thing, which is to strike some superfluous language in the definition of "manufacturer"